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AUTHOR Roberts, Betty H.
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ABSTRACT

There is increasing popular interest in the phenomenon of the successful professional or businessman who switches careers in middle age. There is little hard data available about the phenomenon although there is a great amount of psychological conjecture. This paper briefly reviews the various theories that attempt to explain midlife career change, and then focuses specifically on white collar or professional workers, from ages 35 to 60. It deals with the following aspects: a workable definition of career as it relates to job and leisure; a conceptual framework of the process by which one seems to become a career changer (the framework views career changing as deviant); a review of current literature; theories about career change; constraints on career change; some proposals for intervention; and some of the developing social movement responses. (Author/NG)

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MID-CAREER CHANGE: SMOKE OR FIRE?

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A substantive paper
submitted for fulfillment
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Betty Holroyd Roberts
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CONTENTS

Introduction

Definitions and Conceptual Approach

Consideration of the Process By Which Career Change Occurs

A. Frustrations Resulting in Push-Pull to Second Careers

B. Preconditions Giving Impetus to Change

C. Access to Alternative Careers

Constraints to Entering New Careers

Proposed Interventions and Emerging Social Movements

Policy Implications

INTRODUCTION

A director of an employment agency for the older worker has stated, "One of the most puzzling phenomenon with which the Older Worker Specialist comes in contact is the successful business or professional man who in his forties, or early fifties, wants to change occupation."[1] To confirm this observation, one needs only to read recent articles in popular magazines and newspapers to see the numerous accounts of people like the Harvard economist who turns to opera singing as a career;[2] or the New York City corporation executive who opens a restaurant in a Wyoming ghost town.[3] One can just start a conversation about mid-career change when among middle-aged men in particular and witness the interest that is sparked...especially when questions about the success of such ventures are asked with an intensity that suggests an emerging desire to do the same.

The changing of careers by middle class white collar and professional employees is a phenomenon which presents problems and opportunities for the individuals between ages 35-60. It raises some important questions. The loss of skilled resources in the U. S. economy implies the need for policies to deal with this burgeoning group of career changers. Further, it implies that there is an opportunity for the public and private sectors of the economy to aid its employees in changing their careers.

Time magazine has referred to this condition as the "Second Act in American Lives."[4] Another popular author in England has labeled it the "Gauguin Syndrome" making the observation that some men actually leave the nest and the hive to paint masterpieces and to go native in foreign parts,

or make fortunes by gambling or enter into a conspiracy to change the world.[5] Life magazine did a special feature on middle-aged career changers with a description of their adaptations to the change.[6]

As concern with career changing expands, various descriptive labels have become key word explanations of the phenomenon by professionals in the social sciences. Such labels as "mid-career blues," "mid-career crisis," "occupational menopause," and "career obsolescence," abound in the literature by sociologists, economists, psychologists and gerontologists who are grappling with explanations for this notable occurrence of career change. There are those among these disciplines who suggest that the phenomenon is increasing. For example, Harold L. Sheppard of the Upjohn Institute and Albert D. Biderman and Laure M. Sharp of the Bureau of Social Science Research, Inc., have pointed out that in several of their studies the data seem to suggest that, indeed, the numbers of career changers are increasing; however, no hard data has appeared to confirm this suggestion.

Whatever labels or views are attached to this phenomenon, it is apparent that it has been worth considering in research. Although findings are minimal, opinions and conjectures are not. Different professional assumptions about the causes and/or conditions fertile for career change seem to be expressed in terms of the particular discipline's biases. Psychologists, for example, suggest that career change interest often occurs at middle age "when a man comes face to face with reality and finds that reality doesn't measure up to his dreams."[7] They cite the lack of emotional reward in the occupation,[8] overwhelming pressures to be detached from their fellow workers, etc. On the other hand, sociologists suggest that to understand occupational careers, it is necessary to expand the whole concept to a more generalized

one encompassing subjective career phenomena, the career patterns and the individual's objective career, relying on the personal interpretation of career events.[9] Others see career change as a result of the structural change in the society - ie., obsolescence of occupation in the economic structure and the ensuing dilemma which rapid change poses for the victim, the middle-aged man.[10] A more self-deterministic view is held by some who would say that men and women now seek to anticipate change and shape it for predetermined ends, consequently changing their careers to accomplish individual goals.[11]

A rather stoic, if not pessimistic, view of the middle-aged person as he considers his career is suggested by Jacques. He believes that most men become resigned to their mortality and finitude at middle age, and in that time perspective they lose the desire to achieve greater goals.[12] The idea of a metamorphesus at this age (life begins at forty) does not appear to be common among middle agers according to Jacques' view.

More optimistic interest has been stimulated, however. For example, one western U. S. college has written a unique proposal to develop one year career change programs for top executives in the corporate world who desire to leave the corporations.[13] An assessment of the desire to change careers has been made by the Upjohn Institute by looking at blue collar workers who have strong career change potential.[14] Current conferences on labor management have included in their programs seminars on career change.[15] A rather loose but identifiable population of middle-aged corporation drop-outs have supported a magazine called the Black Bart Brigade. Its 500 member readership shares through the magazine personal experiences and suggestions about changing careers. Many in this particular case choose leisure time as more

important than work time and adapt their careers accordingly.[16]

Although some limited studies have been produced, we need to define the demographic characteristics of these career changers. We need to know what institutional mechanisms forced or enabled the career change and we need to know what, if any, internal motivation spurred the change. We need to know what the trade off is in terms of financial and family hardship during the career change transition. Then, we need to propose workable interventions to those problems or conditions in order to better accomodate individual and societal needs.

To focus on some of these questions, the scope of concern in this paper will be primarily limited to that population of people between the ages of approximately 35 to 60 who are, or have been, white collar and professional employees. Although there may be pertinent allusions to the blue collar population and to the women who change from domestic careers to professional ones, these two groups will essentially be excluded from this paper's focus. An attempt also is made to deliberately steer away from consideration of the particular, but important, phenomenon of women reentering the remunerative labor force after a career of domestic labor in the home as child developers and housekeepers. Instead, as women fall into consideration as white collar and professional employees who change careers, they will not be delineated unless it seems particularly relevant in the studies cited.

With this particular population of white collar middle aged in mind, the following aspects will be dealt with in this paper: a workable definition of career as it relates to job and leisure; a conceptual framework of the process by which one seems to become a career changer that views such changing as deviant of the norms; a review of the current literature, in-

cluding studies of occupational change and its known consequences; theories about the reasons for career change; constraints on changing careers; and some proposed interventions and developing social movement responses.

DEFINITIONS

The concept of a career has many popular and specific meanings. Some of these definitions will be reviewed here. Then, an attempt will be made to synthesize these definitions with the associated concepts of job and leisure into a working definition which will be used throughout this paper.

Sofer in his work, Men in Mid-Career, suggests that there are both subjective and objective aspects of careers - that is, careers involve an individual's perception of himself in the Goffman "moral career" sense and careers involve that status designated by the society in which he lives. Goffman states:[17]

> One side is limited to internal matters held dearly and closely, such as image of self and felt identity. The other side concerns official position, jural relations and style of life, and is part of a publicly accessible institutional complex.

From an objective standpoint Sofer seems to think that a specific career is synonomous with one's occupation rather than a series of job changes. Therefore, if one changes his occupation, he changes his career.[18]

In differentiating a career from a job as Sofer sees it, Haug and Sussman define the second career as "not simply a change in job, but a shift in occupational field."[19] Further, they suggest that the change is not temporary, but one into a new career sequence. According to Stebbins "serial careers" has become an important concern of the sociology of occupations - that is, one may experience several career sequences in our society of constant rapid change.[20]

Murray, Powers and Havighurst discuss careers in terms of work - that is, they call it "work career" and cite Wilensky's (1961) definition of a work career as "a succession of related jobs, arranged in a hierarchy of prestige, through which persons move in an ordered (more-or-less predictable) sequence." They, too, are careful to distinguish the career concept from the job concept by defining "a job as a specific work/salary position."[21] Fine in his discussion of older workers in pursuit of new careers says:[22]

> Careers are not jobs. They involve jobs - but they are a great deal more. In careers the focus is on the worker and his relationship to an organization. In jobs the focus is simply on getting a job of work done.

When one thinks of occupation in the popular sense, one usually is referring to the work/salary definition. In addition, occupation and and job are often used interchangeably. For clarity's sake in this paper, career change will be considered as synonomous with occupational change, and that occupation will usually, but not exclusively, be a work career. A job will be considered here as a piece of a career. For example, one could have many jobs in a nursing career - private nurse, charge nurse, public health nurse - all different jobs but in the same career.

Rapaport describes careers as jobs which are highly salient personally; which have a developmental sequence and which require a high degree of commitment.. He suggests that in the face of rapid social change individuals may be asked to pursue serial careers and readapt to new situations continuously through the life cycle.[23] One of these adaptations seems to be a trend toward earlier flexible allocation of work and leisure, so that a leisure career becomes a salient consideration.

The distinction between a work career and a leisure career is necessary for this paper because the career changes dealt with will to some extent

include leisure careers as a choice. For example, such choices as early retirement, and dropping out of the pervading economic system; or changing the allocation of leisure and work/salary occupations with the weight toward pursuit of a leisure career. As one may guess, leisure here is considered as an integral part of the career change concept.

Murray, et. al., suggest that leisure is the same as "non-economic endeavor" and "involves the use of work-free time."[24] Kaplan further delineates elements of leisure as:[25]

> (1) an antithesis to work as an economic function; (2) a pleasant expectation and recollection; (3) a minimum of involuntary social-role obligations; (4) a psychological perception of freedom; (5) a close relation to values of the culture, and the inclusion of an entire range from inconsequence and insignificance to weightiness and importance; and (6) often, but not necessarily, an activity characterized by the element of play.

Elements 3, 4, and 5 seem more useful as aspects of leisure to consider in career change. These elements of leisure are antithetical to elements of work when work is considered "onerous" and alienating. A distinction has been made between recreation and leisure which makes element 6 seem less useful. Atchely,[26] for example, assumes that

> Recreation refers to activities such as sports, games, the vacation, hobbies, and the like that aim to renew mind and body by either relieving them of tension or delivering them from boredom. Recreation is thus primarily a reaction to some state of body or mind. Leisure activities, on the other hand, are pursued as ends in themselves. They are unplanned and unrequired. Leisure is primarily action, directed generally toward self-development.

Murray, et. al., seem to agree with Atchley when they assert, "Just as there appear to be job patterns organized as careers, there is organization and continuity of leisure activities."[27] They suggest that the way a career sequence develops may have much to do with one's

motivations between work and leisure. In a discussion with Harry Levinson, the Cambridge psychologist who has been concerned with the mid-life crises of middle managers (see footnote 7) he expressed a supporting view that the relationship between leisure and career is strongly based in personal motivations.[28]

In this paper the framework in which career change will be viewed, whether it is work/salary or leisure oriented, is in terms of the patterns emerging which seem common to the white collar or professional employee. These patterns raise several questions. Does the middle class white collar worker or professional change careers because his values about work are changing? Or, is the motivation one of the emergence of delayed gratification needing satisfaction? Is it work or leisure gratification that dominates his motives? As his perspective of a limited life span increases when he reaches middle age, does he sense a need to trade work time for more leisure time? Does he seek occupations which provide more intrinsic gratification, or does he simply drop out of the professional white collar economic structure with its intense pressures into a simpler life style? And if he does, will it only be experimental or will he continue that life style, perhaps developing a new career by accident or by letting a latent desire flower? Is he simply a risk taker looking for a new challenge? And finally, a question of particular importance in the concerns of this paper - What are the circumstances involving knowledge, supports, alternatives, etc., which enable or deter him from deviating from the norms of American society by changing his career at mid-life?

These questions have been barely touched by studies on career or occupational change. The consequences of career change are known even less. A review of some of these studies, however inadequate, can provide

a basis for some of the theoretical considerations already posed by the psychologists, sociologists and gerontologists. These studies will be viewed conceptually through a framework similar to that developed by Becker,[29] with reference to Cloward[30] and Lindesmith.[31]

Work careers, then, will be defined here as that occupational pursuit which consumes a generally greater portion of one's commitment, energy and time whether economically rewarding or not. And career changers will be those who change their occupations whether for external or internal reasons.

A WAY OF VIEWING CAREER CHANGERS

Everett C. Hughes has sketched a middle class career model in which he describes a career as "the course of an individual human being through the work institutions of society."[32] The middle class idea of a career, he suggests, is that on the basis of knowledge or advice, the individual chooses an occupation. He trains for it; enters the work field, and continues in that occupation until an appropriate age of retirement. During that time prior to retirement the individual increases in skill, prestige, power and income. Implicit in his choice of occupation is the assumption that the occupation existed before the individual entered it and that it will last through and beyond his work-life with little change in the demands for skill and knowledge that the person can meet and with only moderate change in the organization system in which the work is done.

However, in actuality, as this paper posits and Hughes suggests, there are many deviations from this model. These deviations are alleged to produce much confusion and trauma to those caught in organizational and systemic changes with their accompanying demands of retraining, unemployment, and hierarchical reordering. On the other hand, they are said to produce

a new lease on life. Discussion of these views will ensue throughout this paper.

Using Hughes view of the model of the middle class idea of a career, it will be useful to look at some of those who are called the "career changers" as deviants from the norms, assuming that the model is the norm. That is, they will be looked upon as deviants from the expected norms of the career model that Hughes describes. In no way is the word deviant to have the popular connotation of "sickness" attached to it in this paper. The sociological view of deviance here is to be viewed as anormal, or atypical.

Use of Howard S. Becker's model of deviance will help to establish a clear and unique perspective in which to approach the factors surrounding career change.[33] He purports that patterns of behavior develop in an orderly sequence. He develops a sequential model of deviance which allows for change through time. This is a model to be differentiated from the simultaneous model of deviance which says that inherent and environmental factors at once produce one who is deviant from the societal norms. The focus of attention in a sequential model is on the behavior of individuals rather than on the broad structural influences. Lindesmith calls this the social psychological position. He suggested that in contrast to the functional view of deviance, this approach has several main features. Besides being critical or skeptical of the functionalist position as applied to specific deviant behavior, it is

> ...less concerned with abstract high level theory than with detailed, empirical examination of specific processes; that it concerns itself more with the implementation of rules than with the rules themselves; and that it is skeptical of a notion of deviance as a unitary concept.

Furthermore, Lindesmith says

> It tends to think of it as a variety of forms of behavior, not traceable to any particular constellation of motivations in the deviant himself (compare anomie theory), but instead

created by the judgments of others.[34]

As an example of this difference between the functional and non-functionalist view of deviance, Becker suggests that the process by which one becomes a deviant, such as a marihuana user, should account for how a person happens to be in a situation where it is available to him; and why he is willing to experiment with it in the first place; and further, why he should continue to use it. Becker affirms that one does not become a user without going through each step of having it available, trying it, and continuing to use it. He suggests that the explanation of each step is an integral part of the accounting for the resulting behavior.

Becker's argument that deviant motives evolve out of the experience with the deviant behavior rather than the reverse seems especially suited to career changing. As one reads the following excerpt and substitutes the words "career changing" for "drug," the descriptive example of Becker's marihuana user serves as a useful focus:[35]

> To put a complex argument in a few words: instead of deviant motives leading to deviant behavior, it is the other way around; the deviant behavior is time produces the deviant motivation. Vague impulses and desires - in this case, probably most frequently a curiosity about the kind of experience the drug will produce - are transformed into definite patterns of action through the social interpretation of a physical experience which is in itself ambiguous.

By use of this model of sequential deviant behavior for career changers, this paper should help elucidate how our present societal work and value system does, or does not, provide available mechanisms for career changers, who, either by internal or external pressures are subject to such a change. A useful typology of these pressures was

developed by the Gerontological Society's committee on research proposals on flexible careers.[36]

The three basic variables which seem to account for the rounding out of the sequential model of deviance are: (1) the committing of a non-conforming act, (2) the sustaining of the pattern of deviance, (3) movement into an organized deviant group. The career changer decides or is forced to change careers; he sustains the interest by actually changing the career and becomes part of a group (organized loosely or tightly) who in formal or informal ways are a subculture of career changers. It seems appropriate with these three basic steps to discuss the different styles of career changing which fall into this sequential model.

By using Everett C. Hughes' middle class career model as a point of departure, a look will be taken at the process by which people see a deviant life-style or career as an alternative. To get a sense of that process and the socialization into the alternatives in a sequential sense, we delineate arbitrarily certain steps in that process.

Basically, the steps seem to be (1) frustration with one's present career; (2) preconditions for change of careers, and (3) access to alternatives. The first, frustration with the present career has been discussed among those in the social sciences in terms of alienation, the blues, and a variety of the other labels described earlier in this paper. This is akin to the Durkheim view that as an individual's possibilities of fulfillment no longer match his aspirations, the pressures toward deviant behavior develop. Frustration, as used here, is more than just dissatisfaction in that it has the impact of provoking a reaction. The second step, closely related to the first, seems to be the preconditions such as the consequences of one's recognition that he is aging; his work

situation is changing; his family-interpersonal life is disintegrating, and so on. The third step in the process of becoming a career changer at middle age is having access to alternatives to the present situation. This involves knowledge of other possible careers by a variety of means and the social supports to provide those alternatives as well as the shaking of old social premises or values.

Keeping these steps in mind, let us give consideration to factors as described in the literature which contribute to the career change process.

CONSIDERATION OF THE FACTORS IN THE CAREER CHANGE PROCESS

As one begins to view the numerous considerations of just what the factors in career changing seem to be, a pattern emerges. From readings on the subject of career change at middle age, each with a particular focus such as psychological, sociological, etc., there is a growing opinion that frustration with one's situation gives great impetus to career change. It would be difficult to specify a line of demarcation between the point at which those frustrations are externally or internally induced - that is, by the organizational changes in one's occupation or by the common middle-aged orientation that "This is not what I meant to do with my life". Therefore, throughout this section dealing with the frustrations as they are described, there will be no attempt to designate whether these frustrations are the result of external or internal pressures and will assume an effect of both except where it is absolutely clear. As a note of reference, however, an interesting framework by Murray, et. al., mentioned earlier does attempt to separate these pressures as if they occurred independently or in certain degrees of combination.[37] Some of the more widely discussed "push and pulls" to career change will be discussed here as those frustrations which give impetus to change.

Performance Inability

Of the various elements of frustration, one of the most visible and somewhat controversial ones is the inability to perform. Whether that inability is physical or a psychological one, recognition of this by a person at the alleged height of his career is often devastating. Levinson[38] in his study of middle-aged managers cited among other factors which intensify the "mid-career blues" two points. One is the narrowing of the hard work period to shrink the age span period during which success can be achieved and the other is the realization by the middle-aged manager that he can't have success at middle age and keep his youth. This is quite clearly demonstrated as he perceives that he is losing his physical capacities. As he experiences the feeling of becoming increasingly obsolescent, he develops the "tendency to feel one cannot keep up with the world no matter how fast he runs."[39]

Obvious examples of the inability to perform occur in such occupations as professional athletes, dancing, coal mining - all occupations requiring continued strong physical prowess. Although there are always exceptions in these fields, generally, recognition of their increasing physical decline causes persons in these occupations to rechannel their talents into more appropriate demands. The less obvious recognition of the inability to perform is psychological.

Levinson and others[40] in studies of the effect of aging on the ability to perform point to what they call psychological obsolesence. This is a case of what John Gardner called "mind forged manacles"[41] or an inability to adapt to change. In Gardner's book Self-Renewel he implores his readers to develop and sustain the capacity to be sensitive to change in order not

to become psychologically inert or frozen.[42] In essence, if one is not up to being recycled, he becomes totally obsolesced. Most poignantly, "The Death of a Salesman" crystallized this dilemma for the man whose final recognition of his inability to perform eventually destroyed him. And even moreso because his whole identity was coterminous with his occupation, a condition to be discussed later.

Unfortunately, there are not yet many studies which substantiate whether the claim that advancing age and inability to perform go hand in hand. It certainly is a general impression that older workers do not perform as well, and one sees the impact of that impression when looking at the prevalent difficulty older workers have in finding employment. The senate hearings on the older worker problem clearly demonstrated this situation from the evidence presented during those hearings. Sometimes that inability to perform has been designated physiological and at other times psychological, but generally it is associated with age.

Interestingly, there have been examples of data on the increasing inability to perform, such as the study by Dalton and Thompson.[43] In this study they discovered that peak performance for engineers decreased by ten years earlier today than it did for those in 1958. They used a 1958 study by Perlz and Andrews with which to compare their data.[44] The "peter principle" of rising to one's level of incompetence was clearly demonstrated in this particular profession. In addition, poor health was found by Parnes and Meyer[45] in their longitudinal study of middle-aged labor force "drop outs" to be an actual cause rather than rationalization for withdrawal from the labor force. One wonders if eventual career change also occurs among those dropouts who seem not to be reemployed in the occupation from which they were dropped.

At any rate, this recognition or perception of one's inability to

perform seems to be a frustration which leads many people to initiate a change in their career demands. Often, as a later discussion points out, this is manifested by developing one's avocational or leisure time interest as a new career.[46]

Career Completion

Career completion has been suggested as another reason that one becomes dissatisfied and entertains the idea of pursuing a new career. Most obviously, the already mentioned athletes and the armed services careerists who reach retirement at a relatively early middle age are candidates for new careers.

The Janowitz study[46] pointed out that military officers who can retire with substantial pensions in their early forties often opt to do so and make preparations to move into other occupations. Although a close look at those occupations pointed out that middle management administrative skills are often transferred from one organization to another by military careerists turned civilian, there is some significant change. These men frequently become teachers, hospital administrators, agency directors, and college administrators. Biderman points out in his study further support of this assessment of what careers are pursued after military retirement.[47]

Another common example of career completion is to be found among women whose domestic careers terminate at their early middle age. Frustrated with roll loss and the need for a sense of meaning, these women often reenter academic settings in order to obtain legitimate credentials with which to begin a new career. Hiestand found many such women in his study.[48]

Although Jacques asserts "For everyone the on-coming years of the

forties are the years when new starts are coming to an end.,"[49] there do seem to be many cases of people moving into new or second careers as their first career comes to an end. Hiestand's study of people who changed careers after 35 presents evidence that many career completers reenter, or enter for the first time, academic settings. They do this to upgrade skills, to change fields or to pursue long-run avocational interests regardless of whether this change has been optional or forced.[50]

There have been many innuendoes about a particular group of career completers who are promoted to vice-presidential statuses of their occupational organizations, but who are functionally obsolescent.[51] The promotions are often a means to obfuscate the career completion. This seems to occur especially in good economic times when these middle-aged employees can afford to be kept. Looked upon as a "setting out to pasture" technique, these vice-presidents occasionally attempt to recharge themselves by starting independent businesses, or by moving into their leisure time interests as an occupational mechanism for remunerative gain.[52]

Occupational Menopause

Another evidence of frustration which appears has been labeled the "mid-career blues" or "occupational menopause." Levinson outlines several psychological factors for middle managers which he believes contributes to these blues. These factors are the following: that success has to be achieved in a shorter time; that there is the inseparability of life and career patterns; that there is the continuous threat of defeat by the management pyramid; that the increase in dependency on the technical infrastructure of an organization leaves the person "to shudder at the specter of catastrophe

beyond his control; that there is a denial of feelings of close affectionate relations with those with whom he works because of the decisions he must sometimes make about them; that he is in a constant state of defensiveness in the role of "King of the Hill" with its internal wear and tear; and, finally, that a shift develops in the prime of life concept he has held.[53]

In addition Levinson cites other factors such as the changes in work style; changes in point of view about political and social thinking as well as the feeling that one is obsolescent; changes in family relationships and personal goals; and, finally, one's view that his vocational choice was a reflection of contingencies and external influences rather than seeing his role as actual chooser of his occupation.[54] This last factor has been strongly supported by Roe in her study which was specifically geared toward career self-perceptions.[55]

In Neugarten's study it was shown that after the age of 45, people become more concerned about purpose in life. This concern is reflected by their making changes in their occupations or by their sinking into stagnating depressions.[56] As to this latter response, Jacques suggests that the mid-life crisis "expresses itself in different ways: the creative career may simply come to an end, either in a drying up of creative work, or in actual death; the creative capacity may begin to show and express itself for the first time; or a decisive change in the quality and context of creativeness may take place."[57] He believes that central to this mid-life phase is the awareness that one is mortal and "over the hill" toward his death. From this point one's ambitions and plans take on a different hue.

Identity Crisis

Another way frustration with one's career seems to be approached is with the identity crisis theory. That is, the crisis which occurs when

one's occupation becomes the person. Sofer in his study discussed how careers are so managed by a person that he becomes that which he is trying to sell - "the continued identity becomes central to the personality."[58]

As one's personal identity becomes synonymous with his career, his values, meaning for his life become so inextricably intertwined with his occupation that he can no longer separate the two. The crisis occurs when his job is wiped out or he becomes obsolescent. In essence he feels himself to have been annihilated. Sofer speaks of "age-status asynchronization" as that point where one should be in his career at a certain age.[59] The evidence that one sees that he will not attain that status seems to produce one of two reactions - to get out of that occupation into another one, or to accept with resignation one's place in life. It could be speculated that career changers from this group are probably less frequent.

However, for those who do change, studies show that their self-concept vastly improves as they risk and succeed in a new occupation. Wilensky showed in his study[60] that the search for identity by the seeking of more satisfying work often leads into new career patterns.

Becker and Strauss discuss that transition period from one career move to another as a painful one for those who suffer from a large dose of identity crisis.[61] They state

> Transition periods are often a necessity, for a man often invests heavily of himself in a position, comes to possess it as it possesses him, and suffers in leaving it. If the full ritual of leave taking is not allowed, the man may not pass fully into his new status.

The frustration of being a modular man plugged into the constantly changing system can be alleviated for those who do make the change or self-actualize, or become to some extent "captain's of their fate."

Often this is accomplished with great fear, discouragement and setback, both financially and socially; but the journalistic accounts, at least, suggest that those who do it have a great sense of well-being. Toffler's concern with the man who is moved (or fired) at the will of the economy is based particularly on this loss of autonomy - a crucial factor in work alienation according to some preliminary studies.[62]

Sheppard proposes that we should promote the withdrawal of the ego from work and make work an instrument for the pursuit of goals and activities outside of the work role.[63] There are groups of people who are notably doing this. They are generally located in communes and loosely organized groups and they are often middle aged.

Becker has noted that commitments to a line of work and to a personal and social identity with that occupation are not necessarily made consciously and deliberately.[65] He tends to see it as a subtle circumstantial condition which engulfs one into that identity.

That the identity-crisis is still a cause of concern is supported by noting that in the February, 1973, issue of a popular middle class magazine, Rogers discusses his experience of having an increasing number of counseling experiences with thirty year olds who are facing just such a crisis. He sees that they are making two responses: to fight it, or to take flight from it.[66] A career change seems to be a mode of fighting it.

Discrepancy Between Aspirations and Achievement

Similar to, but not the same as the identity crisis, is another frustrating condition which has had some attention recently. The discrepancy between one's aspirations and one's achievement seems to be a shaking realization that reveals that one's career at mid-life is not at all what one

expected it to be. Haug and Sussman found that this is the point where one often seeks a new lease on life.[67] A career change is often the result of that seeking.

Levinson describes middle age as "...that vast gulf which begins about 35 and endures until a man has come to terms with himself and his human fate (for no man matures until he has done so.)"[68] Fine in his assessment of older workers at that age of realization says:[69]

> Fundamentally, all careers are open to older workers depending on their interest, motivation, and background. To some extent their careers can and should grow out of what they have been doing, building upon new opportunities available to them. On the other hand, more than younger workers, many of them may be tired and frustrated and in a state of dissonance with the work life they have experienced and thus they may wish to make a change. This change may be from situations of depersonalization and alienation that often characterize modern industry, particularly where there is a preoccupation with Things, (The capitalization is Fine's) to a situation involving some interest in, concern about, and interaction with people.

He suggests that at this point older workers ought to be counseled into careers of service in expanding fields in order to regain that sense of worth.

Stockford produced studies showing grimly uniform evidence of the agony caused by the gap between idealistic expectations and the realities of the world of work. His three studies which were sponsored through the California Institute of Technology's Industrial Relations Center looked at 4000 people over a 20 year period and ascertained the extent of disillusionment with their careers that the subjects experienced.[70]

Contributing factors to this disillusionment according to Litwin[71] are the following: reduced concern for the external world; lack of sensitivity to new information; decreased pride in accomplishment and the lack of establishing realistic and personally meaningful goals.

He does suggest that achievement motivations programs for the older workers is one solution. He bases substantiation of this intervention on studies done by McClelland and Winter.[72]

Fait[73] cites the lack of clear research knowledge about this disillusionment; but she states that her own experience as a state supervisor of the California Older Worker's Program was that of seeing dozens of men who were highly successful professionals who were seeking changes in career. She did refer to a study by Lockheed in California which discovered that worker morale was lowest in the male executive and management personnel and trainers between the ages of 34 and 39 years; but that morale rose steadily after that span. Perhaps morale risers were only those who opted to stay instead of making a change. It may just be the effect of resignation that was referred to by Jacques earlier in this paper.

Awareness of this growing disillusionment among professionals, as well as the much discussed alienated blue collar worker,[74] seems to coincide with Philip Slater's assessment of American society in general.[75]

> One begins to feel there is a severe gap between the fantasies Americans live by and the realities they live in.

He goes on to say that one of the deepest human desires frustrated by the American culture is that desire for independence. He describes that as "the wish to share responsibility for the control of one's impulses and the direction of one's life."[76]

Perhaps the frustration is even more galling to those who achieved success only to find it empty. An interesting comment on this was made by Murray Miner in an article on status inflation in which he opines that equal opportunity + social inequality leads to status inflation and thereby, no gain. He says even the successful "...reject endless

striving because they have seen the prizes and know that winning is losing."[77]

Sheppard points out that concern about flexible or second careers becomes salient among those who sense the discrepancy between original aspirations and mid-life achievements. He cites a study by Weiss and Kahn of Detroit workers which showed that the amount of one's education is positively related to the tendency among employed men to define work as an unenjoyable activity. Sheppard further says that a person

> ...handles these discrepancies for a long period of time by successfully displacing fulfillment of aspirations into into the future, but the day of reckoning does come.[78]

A study by Orville Brim supports Sheppard's statement that

> Such persons may constitute the group for whom second-career opportunities may be the most critical.

Sofer in his study of the work preoccupations of executives found that there was a great emphasis on disappointed expectations. These appeared to give some impetus to changing careers.[79]

When one realizes that he is not likely to write the "great American dissertation," he must come to grips with his personal goals and his real situation. Rather than be caught in a type of dance one could call the pragmatic twist, weaving in and out of occupations, he makes an attempt to seek a new creative way to fulfill redefined goals. Often these goals change in such a way that the expression of new values, or at least suppressed values, are blatently manifested. This case is clearly exemplified by that loosely organized group of middle agers, the Black Bart Brigade. Through the communication mechanism of their magazine and a newsletter they support one another through agreement with the change and give practical suggestions of how one can survive outside the highly corporate executive

system from which they came.

Work Alienation

Another closely related frustration which may lead to career change is work alienation. We will avoid getting into the esoteric nuances of just how alienation among employees is to be defined. That subject has rated several controversal books as well as a Heller School substantive paper. (See David William's substantive paper.) We will view here work alienation as a psycho-social force which has led many in some occupations to reduce work efficiency and others to simply change careers. This alienation has been substantiated far more in the blue collar population than in the white collar one.[81]

It seems, however, that the impact of technological change has been to increase alienation. According to Wilensky in his study of the effect of such change on the work, leisure and life styles of workers, alienation did seem to increase.[82] He states in an abstract of that study

> The net effect of technological changes on the organization of work may be to increase discipline and reduce freedom on the job, to centralize decision making, and to accent hierarchy in the workplace and reliability and flexibility in the employee. The effect on the meaning of work will be to encourage the spread of indifference, and perhaps, of alienation.

A study by Jon Shepard on automation and alienation among white collar office employees showed that such phases as powerlessness, meaninglessness and normlessness and self evaluation at work produced different levels of hostility depending upon the degree of differentiation of labor.[83]

Many in the social science disciplines have dealt with the problem of worker alienation, but few have foreseen or have yet substantiated

that people would leave their occupations rather than adapt. Much of the interventions suggested for this problem have been in the realm of seducing the workers to stay on the job through such programs as job redesign, more music, breaks, cafeterias, educational programs, etc.

In a recent article in Innovation a discussion about the changing concept of work specifically attested to the alienation of the professional and management sector:[84]

> Problems of 'work attitudes' and 'working conditions' used to be confined to the blue collar areas; yet in the last decade or so, such organization problems have begun to invade professional and managerial ranks as well, and have become a source of concern to many companies. The question 'What does the worker want?' now applies to the production line man and manager alike, and its answer affects the entire business community.

The authors of that statement have long been in the field of mental health in work organizations. They cite examples of people who leave high-powered jobs in business who are taking a 30 percent cut in their salaries. They allegedly do it in order to have autonomy in their jobs; to work in situations which reinforce their self-concepts and to take jobs which involve their personal commitment to the job challenges.

Dissatisfaction With Pay, Status or Security

Another consideration among the frustrations at mid-life is that of dissatisfaction with one's status, pay or security. This sometimes creates a push toward a career change among some. Haug and Sussman use as an example of that push the high school teacher who becomes a salesman for more pay; the factory worker who saves to open his own business; or the housewife who seeks economic security by furthering her education.[85] Hiestand's study of those reentering educational milieus pointed out that on the

whole they allegedly did not reenter for economic gain. They were more interested in achieving higher status, more autonomy or security in their new career choice.[86]

The dissatisfaction of employees with the pension security of a work organization has recently attracted the attention of senate investigations. In their findings it was revealed that many tragic cases of employees who believed their pensions to be intact, substantial and as assured as their insurance policies only to be left with nothing existed as witness to the insousciance of employers. To their dismay these employees found themselves being laid off just prior to their full retirement eligibility. Others found that the closing or reorganistion of the employer completely denied the employees their pension benefits.[87] Concern by employees with this hoodwinking of them has caused some who were previously afraid to risk career change to recognized the lack of security in their tenure. Some have sought more security by seeking careers with more assured fringe benefits.

Dissatisfaction with status was supported in Sofer's study of men in mid-career when he compared the satisfaction with the career status of three age groups of men. Of the three groups, 29-34, 35-44 and 45 and over, he found that the middle group was more dissatisfied.[88] He states

> The middle category were distinctly the least satisfied; nearly half of them felt they had not done as well as they expected and about the same proportion felt they had done worse than their contemporaries at school.

One can only speculate about the impact of status, pay and security frustrations on moving people to change careers since there are no studies to clearly substantiate this suggestion.

Quest for Exciting or Socially Useful Work

Another condition leading to a change in career which is given some attention is that of the quest for exciting or socially useful work. It is thought to be an expression of one's frustration with an occupation which does not seem to have in it any intrinsic worth. The result of what Maslow has labeled "meta-motivations," the self-actualizing individual who is essentially gratified in his basic needs moves on to become motivated in other ways.

In Biderman's study of the middle-aged retiring armed services professional, a large percentage of those men sought just such expressions in their newly chosen occupations. Teaching, for example, was greatly utilized as a sequel to a military career. Biderman suggests "The congruity of this career with the public service image may account in part for this special emphasis."[89]

John Gardner in his book Self-Renewel sees this altruistic urge as one which keeps alive the meaning for so-called "burnt out executives." He says[90]

> Despite almost universal belief to the contrary, gratification, ease, comfort, diversion and a state of having achieved all one's goals do not constitute happiness for man.
>
> ...every human being should have the chance to enjoy the comforts and pleasures of good living. All we are saying here is that they are not enough. If they were, the large number of Americans who have been able to indulge their whims on a scale unprecedented in history would be deliriously happy. They would be telling one another of their unparalleled serenity and bliss instead of trading tranquilizer prescriptions.

In his chapter on commitment and meaning he affirms that search for meaning is objectively intellectual. Man produces legend, theories and philosophies and out of his impersonal search for meaning modern science

has developed. However, Gardner points out

> ...man has never been satisfied to let it go at that. He has throughout history shown a compelling need to arrive at conceptions of the universe in terms of which he could regard his own life as meaningful. He wants to know where he fits into the scheme of things. He wants to understand how the great facts of the objective world relate to him and what they imply for his behavior. He wants to know what significance may be found in his own existence, the succeeding generations of his kind and the vivid events of his inner life. He seeks some kind of meaningful framework in which to understand (or at least reconcile himself to) the indignities of chance and circumstance and the fact of death. A number of philosophers and scientists have told him sternly that he must not expect answers to that sort of question, but he pays little heed. He wants, in the words of Kierkegaard, 'a truth which is true for me.' (4) He seeks conceptions of the universe that give dignity, purpose and sense to his own existence.
>
> ...When he fails in this effort he exhibits what Tillich describes as the anxiety of meaninglessness --'anxiety about the loss of an ultimate concern, of a meaning which gives meaning to all meanings.' (5)

The push for volunteerism is a somewhat weaker expression of this seeking. It is interesting to note that some companies, such as General Electric, try to put their executives on a released time basis to pursue community activities ...whether it is for the benefit of the employee or the public relations of the company is not clear. It generally seems to this skeptic to be a coopting accomodation which keeps the executives on hand if needed. On the one hand, giving vent to the employee's need for expressing his meta-motivations, on the other hand, keeping him out of the way of the younger, more agressive "tuned in" executives or managers.

Interestingly, a proposal by Gross of the Claremont Colleges to establish a center for corporate executives to change careers to the not-for-profit sector states as its purpose: "The Center for Changing Careers will serve as a bridge between work that is stultifying and personally unrewarding,

and activity that more meaningfully meets the needs of the participants."[92] Haug and Sussman found that the quest for a worthwhile service occupation important as a reason their second career students chose rehabilitation counseling.[93]

In a study based at Yale University by Levinson (1972) it was found that a distinct adult development stage for middle-aged men between ages 35 and 50 seems to occur. During this stage priorities shift and careers become dissatisfying. Negative reactions to this condition of frustration and dissatisfaction are thought to be alchoholism, divorce and poor job performance.[94] Positive reactions have been thought to be the throwing of oneself into social and political movements (ie., the new politics, environmentalism, consumer advocacy, etc.).

The Claremont proposal mentioned before suggests that these skills of experienced leadership and administrative skills of the nation's prime talent (whom, they argue, are peculiarly vulnerable to this demise) could be tapped for use in the especially needed not-for-profit sector. It is a way of capitalizing on what Levinson and Jacques see as the shift in middle age from concern with personal aggrandizement to concern with ideals and causes. A study by Else Frenkel-Brunswik supports this shift in goal emphasis at middle age.[95]

By whatever mechanisms one uses to subdue the need for a career change in a more useful and exciting occupation, the frustration with one's present career has been shown to be apparent enough to generate a proposal such as the Claremont one.

In summary all of these described conditions of frustration from inability to perform to the quest for socially useful occupations can

be thought of as career change "butt kickers." However, unless one does as Levinson suggests, face the crisis, there would be minimal hope for constructive change. He sees as constructive action the following: first, that one recognize that he is older, less "tuned in", exhausted, unfulfilled, lonely, etc., and then in his personal and business life that he renegotiate his marriage and make new friendships in order to develop companionship; next, that he become future-oriented by becoming actively involved in community or leisure activities that have some enduring purpose beyond his job; and that he should exercise a generative kind of leadership in his work and leave the creative efforts to the younger men, shifting from "quarter-back to coach, from day-to-day operations to long-range planning."[96]

Levinson is, of course, saying to adapt to these frustrations rather than change careers. Assuming that one has the choice, his approach is one to consider. However, for those who decide to move on rather than to adapt, I want to deal in the next section with the second step in the process which moves the career changer into the external preconditions for change, given that his frustration was a predisposition toward that change.

Some Preconditions Relating to Career Change

"Being in the right place at the right time" is a cliché often describing how one successfully accomplishes something. For a career changer this can be as fortunate as being in the wrong place at the right time. Such conditions as early retirement, job closures, family disruption, sudden availability of financing, encouragement by friends and associates are among some of the more salient conditions one sees

as fertile for career changers.

For a closer look into these preconditions which essentially put one on a different "escalator" as metaphorically described by Becker and Strauss,[97] an attempt is made to pull together the opinions and studies about these conditions.

Early Retirement

Although Becker and Strauss suggest that "In all careers, there doubtless are some points at which switching to another career is relatively easy."[98] one push which is not considered easy by many is that of early retirement. The statement that "Pressures for early retirements have gained powerful momentum in recent years." was made in a preface to a Senate Committee hearing on cancelled careers in which it was declared that involuntary retirement was increasing - especially among federal employees of middle age.[99] A study by Heidbreder[100] showed that those between ages 40 and 60 were frequently counselled out or "bumped" out of their jobs with a reduction in pension benefits and no offer of help in job placement elsewhere.

For these involuntarily retired a career change may well be a necessity since a federal cut generally is effective throughout the bureaucracies which could use those skills. Stetson[101] in his case descriptions of those who were starting over at middle age cites several of these victims of change who turned to self-employment, or developed leisure occupations into careers or even adopted a much lower standard of living and liked it. As forced career changers they were the happy consequence examples; however, there were no doubt many others who did not like the change and were unable to step into new roles. Parnes, et. al., found that voluntary job changers

(not necessarily career changers) did evidence much greater satisfaction with their occupation than did the non job changers among both the blue collar and white collar employees.[102]

An example of the process of career changing which seems to occur with relative ease is that of the retired military. Already discussed above in the section on career completion, these early retirees, whose average age is 45 and becoming lower, have assimilated fairly easily into civilian careers. Janowitz and Biderman in their studies of the professional soldier looked into the post-retirement occupations as well as the pre-retirement planning of their subjects. They found that among the preconditions for a successful switching were the generous retirement pay, connections with former colleagues who retired ahead of them and were in civilian jobs, a push by private business to hire what they believed to be skilled leadership, preparation for a new career by furthering their education while still in service, and some mechanisms for pre-retirement counseling within the structure of the armed services.[103]

With the exception of the generous pensions, all of these steps in one way or another certainly seem to be typical of any early retiree's potential opportunities to slide easily into another career. When one looks at the Biderman data on just what occupations are filled by these military retirees, one sees what could be termed a <u>lateral</u> jump into a bureaucratic situation similar to the military with its hierarchical order of status, tasks, specializations, etc. One wonders if the large number who were recruited into college campuses as teachers of science during the post-sputnik phase had any more difficulty than civilian teachers with the burgeoning crop of youth in the '60's.

Like many other employment situations, the career change case is probably very dependent on "who you know." It would be interesting to research whether that factor is a key precondition to entering new careers by those who make changes due to early retirement.

Mid-Career Clinics

As a facilitating precondition which is probably crucial to the career change process, the availability and accessibility of mid-career clinics rates high. They do exist and seem to be growing. A brief description of some of these mechanisms will be helpful.

John Gardner, when he was still head of HEW, proposed in 1967 before a senate hearing that such clinics be established in order to accommodate rapidly increasing employment due to obsolesced skills and to offer opportunities to those who retired early whether voluntarily or involuntarily.[104] Although the specifics of this proposal will be dealt with later in this paper under the section dealing with proposed interventions, it is interesting to note that the private sector was already developing some of these clinics.

The most popularly known clinics are those which developed when the clergy in the 1960's sought to change their careers during the disillusionment with the organized church. (Although I do not have access to the names of these clinics, there are several in New York City and San Francisco which I know have met the needs of some clergy friends of mine.) The career change which seems to have occurred most frequently among these clergy is to careers requiring similar skills, such as teaching, social work and counseling. Probably the most recently reknowned case of clergy change was in the reverse direction - Bishop James Pike left his successful law practice to become a clergyman and Malcolm Boyd left a successful Hollywood business career to become the "espresso priest." Greeley at the University of Chicago has some tentative research into this particular group of career changers,

although it is not clear what part career clinics play in this move.

Several universities and colleges have sponsored such career clinics which seem to especially have a large female clientele. The Radcliff and Wellesley programs started a decade or more ago are examples. State University of New York at Buffalo has an ongoing program for any persons in the community who are seeking specific help in counseling toward a new career.[106]

The already mentioned Claremont proposal includes in its program the opportunity to be a part of an "elite corps" of executives and professionals who will be resocialized and refocused from careers in the corporate world to the non-profit sector. Stringent preconditions to being selected for this program include a fee of $10,000.00, a one year commitment to the program, and not having as reasons for changing careers the usually problematic ones - that is, they specifically caution,[107]

> Those forced from jobs, early retirees, the technologically obsolete, men seeking 'alternative life/work styles' or 'a way out' will all be consciously excluded."

In New York City there are several such clinics which specifically serve the function of easing career change for anyone seeking such changes. According to psychologist Levinson these clinics tend to have people come into their agency for a few hours a week for counseling over time. Already mentioned are the services maintained for several years in the military for this purpose of second career counseling. This service is called the Retired Activities Section of the military.[108] Advertised in the Black Bart Brigade magazine and in Vocations for Social Change are such clinics which are particularly geared toward the drop out career changer of middle age.[109]

Generally, all of the above mentioned clinics state that they are

not employment agencies; rather, they state that they are the transitional mechanisms by which one can most easily and effectively enter a new career. So, for those who would hypothesize that career changers have certain personality traits such as being highly motivated risk takers, an additional factor may be just simply having the availability of such mechanisms as mid-career clinics.

Dislocation by External Forces

Another precondition to career change which is probably the most blatent one is that which thrusts men into job changes, and to a lesser extent, career changes, is the effect of dislocation by external forces such as the closing of an occupational organization. For example, the closing of the Boeing plants in the state of Washington; or the aerospace electronics industry cutback which caused many to lose their employment on the Route 128 complex near Boston.

Similar layoffs have been studied for effects on reemployment. A study by Palen and Fahey of the Studebaker shutdown in 1963 showed that the most important factor affecting an individual's success in finding another job was age.[110] This has been supported by other studies which found similar consequences relating to age - middle age included.[111] One of Palen and Fahey's findings which was contrary to the findings of studies by Chinoy,[112] Lipset,[113] and Bendix and Blauner,[114] was that not many blue collar workers would go into business for themselves for a career change. In fact they found that if anyone thought of self-employment as a response to forced unemployment, it was mostly the middle-aged white collar workers. This is in keeping with preliminary findings that Jacob-

son of the Brandeis University Department of Anthropology has shared with me regarding his studies of the displaced engineers on Route 128 - that many do seek to develop their own businesses, usually by the combination of several of those who were affected by the cut-backs. Of course, most of these businesses were related to their skills as electrical technicians rather than to shifts in occupational field.

In a study by Dyer of middle-aged middle managers and their success at reemployment the factors most closely related to finding reemployment were the number of dependent children, financial security and job search behavior. Dyer did not find age to be as important a factor (although his population were 40 year olds and older, so no comparison with the younger worker was possible.). He did find that those who succeeded in getting employment of comparable status and salary were the "hustlers," or those who "attacked the task of job-hunting with a sense of urgency and diligence."[115]

In Hiestand's study of those who actually changed careers after 35 he found that not many made what he called a "90 degree turn" in careers, but remained in similar fields - especially if the circumstances for change related to forced unemployment.[116]

Although this forced circumstance of career or job change as the result of economic or organization which throw people out of employment seems to be increasing, there is little evidence to actually show in what occupations, if any, middle-aged people are reemployed - that is, are they real changes based on contingent circumstances or just changes to similar occupations to those held before?

As a contingent precondition to career change, however, forced unemployment by external societal circumstances has enough saliency to merit

the concern of the U. S. Senate to submit a bill which has as its purpose "to provide increased employment opportunities for middle-aged and older workers..." and "to establish mid-career services programs in the Department of Labor for persons 45 years of age and older."[117] Although this proposal will be discussed later under intervention strategies, it is important to see that a condition to career change can be publicly supported.

In Sofer's study of these contingencies, both from the executive's and the organization's point of view, he states in his chapter on "Career Concerns and Hazards" that very real layoffs of redundant middle-aged men took place, leaving those still employed terribly uneasy about their futures. Few, however, opted to leave the organizations for another job unless forced to.[118] Certainly, as Hughes suggests[119]

> Part of the study of careers is the discovery of the actual career contingencies of various kinds of work organizations and the results for the careers of individuals.

Family Crises

Often discussed, but not really studied, is what one might call latent contingencies which make career change a possibility, if not an escape. These are the middle-age family crises such as the death of a spouse; or the illness of a spouse. Even more frequently, the crisis of family disruption by divorce may have some impact on career changing.

The first career changer to do a 90 degree turn in my acquaintance was a priest in the Episcopal Church who, upon getting a divorce 10 years ago was circumstantially forced to leave the priesthood. He became a banker with the Chase Manhatten Bank in New York City. Hiestand has implied that underlying many of the overt reasons his 35 and older population gave for changing their careers was an indication that covertly

the change was strongly influenced by a variety of family disruptions. For women he found continuing education for future employment seemed an obvious step after a divorce for reasons of economic survival as well as career motivation.

Although there does not seem to be any data available specifically relating to the idea that divorce, or family breakup, in particular, is a salient contingency which hastens or give impetus to a career change, Levinson suggests that it does appear that at middle age men seem to change both careers and wives.[121]

Such speculation may be tested as more studies of the increasing rate of divorce is looked at more carefully. Allusions by several studies do imply a relationship between family disruption and career change. Zeller seems to find evidence that a change in marital status does relate to a change in labor force status.[122] In the Parnes, et. al. study of pre-retirement years, some of their data suggested that marital stability and occupational stability were clearly related.[123] Sofer, too, considers from his study that there is a close relationship between dissatisfaction with marriage, etc. to one's pleasure in his work or vica versa. And a final example is the statement of the director of the mid-career counseling center in Buffalo that there is a high correlation between new career and marriage conflict or dissolution. Particularly, in dealing with career seeking women, the director suggests that women seem to seek resolution in career and marriage simultaneously.

In assessing the significance of family disruption as a key factor in career change, further study would be necessary with some caution about making any single factor a causal one.

Availability of Finances

Probably as important a precondition as any contingency is the availability of monies in an opening field of interest which serves to enable career change with some ease. Examples of such monies (before the Nixon axe) were in training grants for health manpower and social work which enabled people to change their careers as well as further them.

This factor of available money was of particular interest in Hiestand's study of career changers. Available financing literally "fell" upon some of his population thereby making a career change much more attractive and easier to facilitate.[124]

Sheppard in his study of blue collar potential second careerists found that 35 per cent of 140 workers forty years of age or older would opt for a second career if financial opportunities ("enough money to support yourself and your family") were available - and that those workers would preferably be in jobs really different from what they were presently doing.[125] Obviously, financial security for some would be a prerequisite to changing careers. Hiestand, however, did find some in his study who made the necessary economic sacrifices because they were more interested in changing careers than in increasing their later income. That is, money was neither a primary motivation or a particular hinderance to their career change.

Movement into developing professions, however, unquestionably is enhanced by the availability of finances; otherwise, for example, Heller school at Brandeis University might not have its present student body pursuing gerontology, or indeed, the whole social welfare field. The impact of federal financing in the form of training grants is a clear example of the developing impetus it gives to a "quickie" profession. Its withdrawal even more clearly illustrates the impact on manpower resources

- especially in fledgling professions such as gerontology.

Janowitz[126] has suggested that commitment to the military career has lessened as increased civilian financial opportunities have increased. He states

> Like all professions, monetary considerations are important, and in the most part, the special advantages of military retirement provided that lifetime (which was 30 years of active duty service) was a powerful career incentive in weighing the alternative opportunities outside of the armed forces. But the expansion of civilian retirement programs and the emergence of the typical 20 year career have weakened these monetary attractions that operated in favor of the military.

Of all of the precondition contingencies that compose the second step in the process of career changing, availability of financial security is no doubt important. Some interventions relating to this factor, particularly in continuing education, that are in operation in other countries will be described later. However, it is important to note that this factor has not gone unnoticed in Denmark, England or Germany for they make financial support a major part of their career change programs.

In summarizing the career change contingencies which seem to be important, early retirement, mid-career clinics, organizational change, family disruption and financing all seem to have substantial influence on the path one takes with his occupation. This leads us to the next step of describing what accesses one may actually have to alternative careers.

Access to Alternative Careers

In Becker's discussion of the career of a marihuana user, he cites a crucial step in the process of that career as one of having access to alternatives - that is, one can become a marihuana user only after he can get it.[127] This seems analagous to the process by which

the career changer actually changes careers.[128] As Murray, et. al. suggest

> The existence and quality of job alternatives or opportunities which an individual perceives as available plays a central role in his acting on the dispostion to change jobs.

Occupational Grapevine Information

Word of mouth, or the "occupational grapevine," seems to have some importance in involving middle agers into the notion that career change is possible. Fine in his discussion of older workers in pursuit of new careers points out that careers for older workers are especially available in the service field.[129] Whether it is the job of "coaching" younger or disadvantaged workers, the correctional field as community models, environmental concerns or physical, social and cultural programs in hospitals, community centers, etc., there is a need for assistants to the professionals in these fields. Muchof the recruitment of these older workers has been done by "somebody told me" contacts. Hearing about these programs, particularly when the Community Action programs were at their height caused many older workers to get back into, or to change their jobs to more service oriented work. That is, these opportunities were publicized and available.[130]

Informal as well as formal means of communicating about opportunities seem to have an impact on career changing. Examples of this are found in Hiestand's study in which phrases similar to "Someone told me about this chance to get financial aid to go back to school" sparked people to change careers.[131] He found few actually planned ahead methodically; but just grabbed the opportunity when it arose.

Many journalistic accounts of career changing seem to indicate that the "heard about" flash opportunity was the carrot that seduced the frustrated work horse to break out of his occupational corral.

Examples of this are particularly replete in Stetson's account of new careerists.[132]

An interesting communications means for the middle-aged career drop out is the aforementioned Black Bart Brigade magazine. Its cover states "Black Bart Brigade is an anti-profit publication devoted to the enrichment of life...and refers to anyone who has learned how to pursue life outside the confines of the system."[133] A responsive subscribing readership of 500 people seem to utilize this magazine and its "why and how to do it" articles to make dramatic, deviant changes in their careers. From Harold L. Sheppard to Shimone Gottschalk interest in this unique response for middle agers has been stimulated. Perhaps agreement that occupational malaise or frustration is closely associated with such statements as the Black Bart Brigade editor, Irv Thomas, has made. They are "We have warped ourselves to conform to one-dimensional systems" and "...that we are living in a society where there are no longer any movers, only the moved. More correctly, these are the shoved, the manipulated, the displaced, the distorted and the used."[134] Many of the studies cited have confirmed that lack of autonomy felt by employees has much to do with their frustration.

Just as the marihuana smoker gets into usage because someone says "Hey, try it; you'll like it." one could speculate that career changers can likewise be brought in by the grapevine. First, one needs a fertile field. Although present evidence doesn't point out how fertile the field is, the flowering of career change seems based on where the seeds fall.

Leisure Time

Another support to changing careers is receiving more attention recently. That is the redirecting of one's avocational interest or leisure time activity into a career.

Examples of this alternative career change abound in the journalistic literature; however, some studies are beginning to show this as a fairly common step in the direction of a career change. Whether it is the economist turned opera singer; the businessman turned winemaker; or salesman turned sailboat charterer, Clague suggests that "...there is a large group of middle-aged workers who want more leisure. They want an occupation which combines work and leisure in a happy combination."[135] Some seem to go all the way and make their leisure activity their remunerative occupation, rather than try to use frustrating work as the support for the leisure interest.

Hiestand cites examples of social service supervisors who turned to English Literature, a missionary to linguistics, an interior designer to educational administrator, and so on. All of them had another leisure time consuming interest which caused them to make a clear career switch to that leisure occupation.[136]

In a study of retirees and flexible careerists initiated by the research committee on flexible careers for the Gerontological Society, a report on the factors influencing career change notes with interest the impact of leisure on career changing. "...There is a connection, at least subjectively, between a person's leisure and work activity. Thus, the nature of a job history may depend on the nature of a leisure history for many individuals."[137] Oliver's study of the "Career and Leisure Patterns of Middle-Aged Metropolitan Out-Migrants" found that job changes for this group were as numerous after age 41 as prior to that age.[138]

Hearn has produced a study of interest about second careerists who became artists after retiring or after their family responsibilities had lessened. Most of these subjects had diverted their early artistic

interests and desires to remunerative careers which were less satisfying to them. When their chance came, they devoted their energies to their first love - the artistic career. Hearn suggested that[139]

> ...an aid to retirement satisfaction (and pre-retirement leisure satisfaction) would be mid-life training in activities which may bring income to the individual and afford him a valued self image enhanced by reference group affiliation which carries over into retirement.

More study is certainly in order about this relationship of leisure occupations to one's remunerative occupation and its impact on career change choices.

Association With Career Changers

Another consideration that has the impact of pulling middle agers into changing careers is that of being loosely associated with a community of career changers. A sort of "If he can do it, it must be possible for me to do it" attitude pervades. Certainly, there seems to be somewhat of a proselytizing game which goes on between those who have made a change with those who are obviously frustrated with their present occupations.

It was suggested by Biderman that a factor influencing what careers military retirees chose was the outside contacts of the military with their colleagues who were employed in civilian jobs. Among the military retirees there is a large community of those who knowing their friends are soon to retire will apprise them of the availability of particular employment. This may be done for two reasons: to give friends contacts for employment and to surround one's own job with people who have been socialized by the military. In a small liberal arts college and a hospital with which I was associated, I observed that many former military careerists had access

to their new occupations as the result of prior friendships in the military. And, indeed, even those who did not previously know one another and who were in a position to influence hiring would prefer military personnel to other applicants. There is additional evidence that the military tend to have civilian employment near the military family where there is access to facilities such as commissaries and hospitals - not a small contingency in determining the second career of retired military according to Janowitz.[140]

Judging from the letters to the editor of the Black Bart Brigade, one of the appeals of the movement is that there are already those experienced career drop-outs who can guide and lend a hand to the neophytes.[141] And another already existing community of career changers among the clergy and nuns has relevance as a support to those clergy who leave the ministry to pursue secular carpers. Such organizations do often use a sort of group therapy technique as they aid these particular changers in their career transitions.

Career Mobility and Occupational Expansion

Finally, a contingency having an impact as an alternative to an unsatisfying career has been access to opening fields with rapid mobility as an attraction. Often these fields have concurrent financial assistance for furthering one's education and training. According to Hiestand's study, this factor weighed heavily in choices that his population made. Social work students seemed particularly to have jumped on the career escalator because the alleged financial support and rapid career mobility was so attractive.[142] Sometimes these opportunities were offered within one's organization and sometimes they were opportunities outside the career field of the second careerists he studied.

Haug and Sussman[143] support the view that career mobility and occupa-

tional expansion aid in career change. They state:

> Rapid expansion of an occupational field is a necessary but not sufficient condition for second career opportunities. Even a rapidly expanding field may not provide easy openings if entrance requirements are so minimal as to attract large numbers of aspirants. Shortages of help occur when rapid expansion is accompanied by the demand for some measure of specialized training. In these fields, also, the prospects for rapid mobility and early achievement of elite status within the work system are a special attraction.
> 144

In attesting to this idea in the field of counseling McGowan agrees in his discussion of the development of counseling that it was aided by the factors cited by Haug and Sussman.

With such access mechanisms as the four just described (communication, community, leisure occupation and career expansion) available to the potential career changer, such a move becomes more probable. Although the last one mentioned (of available training money for expanding occupations) may cease with the present direction of the federal administration, there are special opportunities which should be mentioned in closing this section. This contingency is peculiarly attractive in the Boston area. It is the availability of the educational milieu which makes educational advancement not an insurmountable means to changing careers. Some can gradually change careers by this means while still occupied with the old career. Women, of course, suit this pattern; but there are cases of "leaves of absence" and "educational leave" and just plain work schedule adjustments which make this alternative mechanism usable. Hiestand discovered in his study that areas such as Boston are important factors. He says:

> However, a metropolitan area turned out to be a significant delineation of the options of middle aged persons in quite a different way. By and large, metropolitan universities serve commuting students, whereas rural universities serve students who move to the campus. Because of ties to family, home, job, etc., middle-aged students are usually commuters.

From his study he concluded:

> Only in metropolitan areas can there be a significant number of qualified middle-aged persons who desire to attend professional or graduate school.

This fifth contingency of available educational and training institutions is the final one to be discussed in this section on alterative mechanisms available to career changers. Besides these many mechanisms which can aid a person in changing his career, whether it is his own feelings, his circumstantial conditions, or his access to alternatives, we need to consider the restraining factors which often prevent people from considering a new career.

CONSTRAINTS ON ENTERING A NEW CAREER

There are many barriers to moving into a new career. Some of them will be considered here.

In discussing career concerns and hazards, Sofer [146] observed

> ...a career involves substantial parts of one's life commitment to particular tasks, colleagues and organizations; and claims to a particular type of identity and social reputation. Entry into a particular occupation or structure involves putting an irretrievable portion of time into a particular job. A realized misinvestment and attempts to correct it necessitate a new start. Such realization often comes only after a protracted period of reality testing when the person may be faced with the choice of continuing with something about which he is uneasy or trying something else which is an unknown quantity for him and when, for all he knows, he may also be unhappy or unsuccessful.

The very real factor of <u>risk</u> is thereby a constraint which may keep many frustrated new career potentials from ever taking the step. General attitudes toward the middle aged in school (See Hiestand) and general opinions about middle-aged learning ability certainly make the element of risk more salient to potential career changers.

Perhaps for those who do change careers we would find that they are people attuned to taking risks and are high achievers. To my knowledge no studies have substantiated the first speculation.[147] Haug and Sussman, however, in their findings did suggest the importance that risk plays.

> The second career phenomenon is most common among married women, among those who have already achieved middle class occupational status, and among younger persons seeking upward mobility. Two of these groups may be presumed to have a minimum of risk in entering a second career. The married women are not likely to be the sole earners of their families and are probably not endangering their livelihoods by a job change. Younger persons are apt to have a relatively low investment in a prior career and thus are risking less in tenure and status by seeking advancement in a different line of work. It is apparent that the element of risk is one variable to be considered in studying the second career phenomenon.

All the attractions to a second career, such as autonomy, service orientations, status and financial rewards, are often offset by the lengthy training required. Certainly in the professions this constraint has very real implications when one considers the trade-off between present security and delayed gratification, most clearly exemplified in the medical profession. Moore in his description of the professions particularly alludes to this descriptive prerequisite as a barrier to becoming a professional.[148]

An individual may want to change careers but not do so because attractive alternatives are not available. Of those who did opt for the long training period, Hiestand found that middle-aged persons who reentered the academic setting were often discriminated against in admissions, in financial granting and often were assessed as being problems in that setting. There were conflicting opinions about this latter barrier which he explored in his study. In discussing these

admission attitudes, Hiestand said the following:

> Many admissions offices confess to being concerned about the basic reason that an applicant tries to reenter school at a later age than usual. The reason for reentering is seen as a strong clue to the probabilities of completion as well as having some bearing on the function of the school. For instance, if an applicant has failed in his previous line of work, most schools would be extremely reluctant to admit him. On the other hand, if the previous work was stultifying, and particularly if it involved a conflict between competitive and noncompetitive values, many schools may be more favorably inclined. Of course, if an older applicant has been a success and now states that his interests are changing, there may be little resistance to him.

He found in addition that there were some admissions officers who viewed, for example, that the time invested in getting a doctorate was not economical for middle agers since quantitatively there would be fewer years of productivity gained than for such an investment in a younger person.

As an inhibiting constraint to career change, length of training with its concommittant problems is clearly a salient one for would-be career changers.

Aside from the barriers mentioned in the admissions policies for those middle agers who wish to return to an academic setting, there are other age-related problems.

At middle age, many family responsibilities reach their apex of demand - that is, children are going to college; there are ailing parents to support; expenses for health care increase; and the standard of living and style of life become more expensive. If these demands persist and one cannot make the trade off for a more satisfying career because he feels these obligations to be serious, he is trapped.

In addition to those responsibilities a middle-aged person might suffer from what Sofer calls "status asynchronization" and "age asynchronization" - that is, at a certain age, one is supposed to have achieved a certain status in his career or be labeled a failure (such as a downwardly mobile bureaucrat). He says "Success in a career, as judged by the person himself and his colleagues, is closely connected with age."[150]

Making the grade at an appropriate age may be a strong deterrant to those who are desirous from entering a new career - especially where their status mobility might suffer. Cain, in his discussion of the phenomenon of age-status asynchronization stated that persons caught in such status ambiguities are put under considerable stress.[151]

The requirements associated with entering a new career constitute another constraint. Some of those requirements have already been mentioned such as more training. However, in a more subtle way there is the whole socialization process by which one goes through the "rites of passage", so to speak.[152] Sofer points out that

> The induction phase of entry into the organization is usually only the first of a sequence of formal training events. These seek at the overt level to convey knowledge and technical skill relevant to the effective operation of the organization. Somewhat less formally and deliberately, massive communications are being made about the values sought and prized in the organization and the types of interpersonal behavior, personality and demeanours that are acceptable.

Moore agrees with Sofer in his description of that induction mystique.[153]

> The bond established by shared mysteries, exemplified in technical language and common styles of work and often even common attire, bespeaks a consciousness of being set apart, and insisting on it.

The middle-aged person who wishes to move into a new career is probably aware of that process of socialization which is time bound

making entrance into a career more difficult. An example of this constraint is that of a middle ager who becomes a lawyer without having already established those ties which are so necessary to career success - friendships with county courts, judges, politicians, businessmen and the like - a formidable handicap.

Fine summarizes many of these subtle requirements when he states[154]

> Task performance is not the heart of the matter. What matters are the rites of passage - the commitment to training, to attendance at authorized schools, to securing credentials, to memberships in professional organizations, to subscription to a code of ethics, etc.

A final constraint to be considered here is that of seniority and status being non-transferable. Studies by the congress into the lack of portability of pension plans[155] shows that this can be a handicap to career mobility. This whole problem was summarized rather clearly in a background and issues paper on Income prepared for the 1971 White House Conference on Aging.

> Pension portability refers to the transfer of pension rights from one plan to another when a worker changes employment. The question of pension portability is intimately related to the nature of pension payments. If pensions to a worker were considered as gratuities from an employer as rewards for loyal service over a long tenure, the question of an employee's rights to his pensions theoretically would not even exist either under voluntary or involuntary termination of employment. However, if pensions are viewed as part of a worker's compensation, consisting of current payment of wages, deferred payment of wages in the form of retirement pensions, and other health and welfare fringe benefits including paid vacation and the like, then the question of pension portability takes on a new dimension.
>
> Either voluntary or involuntary departure from employment may disqualify a worker for any rights to a pension if the worker has not met the age and/or service eligibility for vesting. A worker who voluntarily quits the job may not be too concerned with forfeiting part or all of pension rights because presumbaly the new employment has

> offered better terms. However, for a worker who is involuntarily discharged from the job, forfeiture of pension rights will certainly add to the aggravation of job loss. In either case, so long as pensions are part of a compenstaion package, giving up of that portion of wages that is deferred reaises the question of equitable treatment ow workers with shorter tenure and younger ages vis-a-vis those with longer tenure and older ages. Trends toward more liberalized vesting requirements, as cited earlier, do not offer protection to a large percentage of workers who average less than ten years in a job. It is recognized that a payment for employee benefits (including pensions) is just as much a production cost as is a direct payment for wages (Moore, 1970). In that light, there is a strong case for portability of pension rights as well as for much more liberalized conditions for vesting...

In addition to this threat of losing pension claims there is the associated one of losing one's status and seniority. There are many to whom these issues are important enough that they are unable to move in their careers because the move would likely mean a lowering of their statuses and seniority at ages where it may be perceived as important and unachievable the second time around.

All of these mentioned constraints to some extent have solutions in the form of proposed interventions by various people who are cognizant of the impact of them on people who must or wish to change careers.

PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS AND SEMI-STRUCTURED RESPONSES

To some extent the push-pull aspects of career change have been outlined in this paper along with references to the paucity of studies dealing explicitly with career change at middle age for the white collar and/or professional middle class employee. There have been several responses to the career change phenomenon even though its prevalance has not really been documented as/ cause for national concern.

Evidence of concern, however, about the whole issue of career change has manifested itself in a variety of proposals or interventions both

in formal and informal ways. In addition, an apparent counter culture social movement appears to be emerging as a response to the multiple complex of problems associated with middle-age crisis, career change and the apparent changing nature of work in our society. In this section some of these proposals will be described with an additional description of that unique response as exemplified by that already mentioned deviant sub-culture of middle-aged career drop outs, the Black Bart Brigade.

Harold Sheppard in discussing the societal milieu in which changing careers occurs has suggested the following:[156]

> Changing technology is naturally accompanied by changes in the skills necessary to use that technology. One of the critical points here is that our sources of socialization - chiefly the family and the school - do little if anything to prepare members of society for multi-careers prior to their entering the world of work. Such preparation need not be strictly devoted to actual acquisition of specific task skills of widely varying character. Perhaps it would be more relevant to prepare young people psychologically for the fact that before they die they will have entered a variety of somewhat differing jobs.

He goes on to suggest that there is lacking an institutional mechanism for aiding adults in entering new and different occupations.[157] He states

> In fact, one could make a case for the proposition that such institutions do everything in their power to discourage and make it impossible to facilitate occupational change. A more charitable proposition would be that, in our effort to solve certain problems and to achieve other goals, we have developed solutions and mechanisms that - without malice or a deliberate attempt - function today as anachronistic obstacles to the encouragement and facilitation of second careers. Typical examples include certain provisions of pension plans, narrow in range seniority rules, and early retirement as a so-called solution to unemployment or other personnel problems.

He cites suggestions by others of a need for education for multiple careers, provision for occasional "moratoriums from productive work" or sabbaticals to do intrinsically satisfying work, such as that

with a community focus.

Striner, who has done an extensive study of other nations' responses to the career change problem, leans heavily on continuing education throughout life as the most appropriate intervention. Some of his suggestions are that we view the experiences of Denmark, France and Germany in their programmatic reactions to need for retraining and to take the following steps:

> 1. To enact a permanent education and training law, providing every person over age 17 to no upper limit on a full time basis, the educational stipend and personal income he needs to pursue an education-training program.
>
> 2. To federalize all state unemployment insurance funds and convert them to a positive use as National Economic Security Funds for both supporting education-training programs as well as unemployment security benefits.
>
> 3. To provide institutionalized grants to encourage the development and expansion of education-training courses designed to meet the goals of the act suggested in no. 1 above.

In addition to these three suggestions he delineates specific mechanisms for insuring good training institutions, counseling centers, special residential education training programs (such as in prisons) and the establishment of a government administrative organization called the Bureau of Continuing Training.[158]

He sees these proposals as important interventions in the series of dramatic changes affecting our whole concept of occupations and careers - that is, the increase in longevity and the rate of technological change. He states, "When one takes these two phenomenon together, it becomes rather obvious that unless there is a major change in our educational and training systems, people may live longer but will be plagued by frustration and anxiety."[159]

Perhaps in a sense of greater immediacy, John Gardner, as Secretary of HEW, sought to encourage Congress to meet the need for mechanisms to enable retirees especially to seek new careers in order to find meaningful self-renewing activity. In his suggestions for building what he called the "capacity for self-renewal" he described the following unnecessary occurrence:[160]

> We all know people who retire psychologically when they are in their 30's or 40's. They may continue working for another two or three decades but psychologically speaking they have turned in their uniforms. Perhaps they just grew tired. Perhaps they were trapped by circumstance or perhaps they were defeated by their own self-doubt or fear or cynicism or self-indulgence.

His response to this condition was to

> ...design our institutions so that they encourage continued learning and growth through inservice training, career development programs, career counseling, systematic reassignment in interest of growth, and sabbatical periods for study.[161]

He further suggested

> I would like to see the time come when many employing organizations will sponsor mid-career clinics to which men and women can go to re-examine the goals of their working life and consider changes of direction. Schools, universities, unions and other organizations could have similar clinics.

Fine in stating his guidelines for the design of new careers suggests that for employers "It is commitment on the part of employers that transforms dead-end jobs into opportunities for growth."[162] He outlined several technical and strategic guidelines for employers to use to accomplish this goal. The technical ones include giving more status titles to jobs, better selection procedures for advancement, job redesign, supervision geared toward growth rather than policing, compensation increases corresponding with experience and competence

as well as further training and growth opportunities. His three strategies are to direct new careers primarily at the poor and disadvantaged; to develop new careers in emerging and expanding fields and to initiate new careers for both short-term and long-term approaches.[163]

Paul Armen, in his assessment of technological obsolescence for the Harvard University's Program on Technology and Society (1964-1972) has suggested a novel hospital style individualized institution to be instituted in universities. He states, "Universities would admit patients (students) when they arrived for treatment (education) and not just at one or two times a year. On arrival a diagnosis would be made in the deficiencies of the student's knowledge and then the educational process would be designed to fill in the gaps."[164] The industrial modular man concept seems to have reached its epitome in this suggestion. Shades of 1984!

Based on what he calls his optimistic findings about the efficacy of middle-aged people reentering academic institutions for purposes of career change, Hiestand suggests some possibilities of intervention. Some of these proposals are a rethinking by developmental psychologists about the growth potential of many middle-aged; provision of financial support to enable continuing education; for manpower specialists and professional leaders to seek out the significantly large potential pool of new manpower in middle-aged skins; to confront the age discrimination biases with respect to hiring and advancement of professionals; to seek for flexible admission policies for the middle-aged in universities; to increase part-time educational opportunities; to reassess the entire subject of returns on educational investments in light of evidence of mid-career mobility and to explore the evidenced need for self-satisfaction among older professionals that can be satiated by involvement in social service.[165]

At a recent conference of management, unions, the federal government, universities, magazines (such as Fortune), the Ford Foundation, and the Upjohn Institute, a pilot program sponsored by the Ford Foundation was described which enabled in the late 1960's people seeking to enter new careers to get specialized training at Columbia University. Interest in the program was so strong that it was the opinion of Alan Entine, then Vice President of SUNY at Stony Brook that not only did professional associations need to adjust their entire criteria for middle-aged people but that other than conventional classrooms should be used, such as television, (A T & T already does this) home study via extension programs and similar mechanisms.[166] At this same conference it was suggested that subsidies such as those used in Europe be provided for new careerists. Other industries reported having such programs for career change in case of lay-off (General Electric) or for career change within an organization (Polaroid).

Although no one has catalogued it, there seems to be minimal response by private industry to propose or implement mechanisms useful for career change; however, there have been some legislative efforts at the congressional level.

In 1970 the Manpower Bill contained a title dealing with mid-career training. Although this one was vetoed, another one was introduced in 1971 as the "Middle-Aged and Older Worker's Employment Act" (S. 1307) "to establish a comprehensive mid-career development services program in the Department of Labor to provide training, counseling and special supportive service for persons 45 and older."[167] This was seen as a possible solution to the shocking impact of the reduction-in-force policies on middle-aged federal employees.[168]

A variety of responses to the mid-career problem of older workers have been brought before congress; however, none to day have passed or been funded which deal directly with middle-age career changers - perhaps because no one has yet documented that career changing is in fact a public problem. Congressional programs have generally been for older workers or retirees in their "golden years", the "oldie goldies", through utilization of Community Action mechanisms.[169]

Although the federal response to this problem is fairly immobilized at the present, there have been similar proposals by research societies. For example, the Committee on Research Designs and Proposals in Applied Social Gerontology on Flexible Careers and Life Styles, while including the proposals already cited, further suggested that occupations must organize themselves to facilitate the process of re-entrance into work, especially for women; that society should perhaps "assume that few person's actually benefit from working in one occupation for more than, say, 10 years and that with some exceptions, those who do produce diminishing returns for the organizations."[170] They further suggested encouragement of the use of leisure-work activities as potential sources of profit.[171]

Other suggestions regarding the retraining of older workers have been made. Fine's is that amore analytic examination of the characteristics for a career (the skill potential, the new kinds of age-related activities developing) should be made by major policy and program implementors in manpower and economic development; and that cognizance should be made of the adaptive, functional, and specific content skills of older workers.[172] While Belbin similarly is suggesting that the Montessori-like discovery method of learning is highly useful in retraining older workers, tests seem to confirm this method's viability.[173]

Binstock proposed in congressional hearings in 1969 that an American Community Services Force be set up as a nationwide network of community programs having as one of its programs a career personnel focus. Beneficiaries or this program would be the technologically unemployed, retirees, housewives, employed people who wanted to do community work, and employees who wished to switch careers.[174] This comprehensive, programmatic approach encompasses much of all the less radical interventions thus far that have come to the attention of this writer.

Most of the interventions mentioned seem to basically be saying, "Make the man fit the societal needs," (focus is economic system) or "Make the society fit the man's needs," (focus is on individual sense of meaning). In essence these approaches seem to be pointing out that there is a trade off between developing the post-industrial modular man, as Toffler describes him,[175] or developing a modular economic system. Some, such as Striner, feel it should be the latter.

The basic question arises of what is happening in our system which causes people to rearrange themselves at middle age, especially when they epitomize the "successful" in our society. This question causes one to view the following example/a less common response as perhaps significant of pioneering forerunners of a social movement whose work and career values at middle age take a remarkable turn.

This more extreme (to the point of being labeled "deviant" of the norms) response to the whole dilemma of work in American Society and the middle-aged crisis is that unplanned, semi-structured movement of the Black Bart Brigade. They are of interest for two reasons, it seems. They represent (from a cursory observation) intelligent, articulate, suc-

cessful middle class middle agers who have much to lose economically by taking this step and yet, they do it; and, secondly, the process which either pushed or pulled them into a drop out style of life would be worth examining.[176] Irv Thomas, the editor of the magazine wrote

> The subjects of career change and dropping out kind of merge into one another, and I don't know that there is any hard and fast line between the two by common recognition. But outside of that shady-line area, I can feel the distinction pretty well in my own head. The career changer stays within the broad societal conceptual mainstream, while the dropout runs counter to the society, and continues to get farther out in that direction. One who continues in a 9-5, suit and tie (or dress and hairdresser) routine has simply changed careers, not lifestyles. The shady area is where one goes to the country, invests in a resort-type or leisure-market business, and in truth lives differently than before, but continues to live in an isolated, cellular, money/product oriented life.

He felt most of the so-called dropouts fit into the shady area. He stated

> There are, however, a small but growing number of us who are simply deserting the system, in as many of its manifestations as possible. That means - - no regular job, simple and often mobile living patterns, avoidance of things like shopping centers, tax forms, automobiles, TV, telephones, and an increasing dependence on various kinds of collectivity and community. We have found that it can be done, and that it brings us a kind of Thoreauvian sense of renewal through freedom and simplicity.

Some would ridicule the response of this group. However, Everett C. Hughes in his views about emerging social movements in a paper he did on Social Movements and Careers points out[177]

> A social movement always disturbs institutional routine, thus disturbing also the career of a person who is moving through the established set of institutions in which his work takes place. There are many definitions of social movements; but in all of them the movement is a threat to the institution and thus to careers...Park's great contribution was his fantastic emphasis on social unrest and on collective behavior. It was not merely the fact that most behavior is collective that intrigued him; he

> was interested in the nature of collective behavior and, especially, collective behavior of the kind that breaks with routine...
>
> We are now again in a time of many social movements. Park connected social movements with social unrest. Never in my lifetime has there been such social unrest as now...

Hughes then notes how this period of great unrest has spawned many responses that take people out of the "middle class model of a career pattern."[178] He states

> What kind of living do people have who in this simple way devote themselves to a movement is another matter. It is probably not much of a living, and they may turn to rather odd ways of working and to things which require a very low level of skills. They may start making simple jewelry, or they may start selling leather or fake handbags on the streets of New York or even, as we saw them, on the streets of a town in Corsica. A lot stand around the streets selling periodicals, such as Boston After Dark-- there can't be enough money in that to feed them, and there are far too many of them doing it...
>
> Thus there are many people whose expected track in life is broken off -- who jump the rails or slide off the rails of education and worldly career to become parts of these movements. This is in part a reversal of the economy of the time. Most people put more time at work than at religion. In this case, the time is put at religion and the work, if engaged in, is engaged in merely to support the person while he devotes himself to his new cause and faith.
>
> What happens to these people in the long run I cannot say.

Hughes further points out something intriguing enough to cause me to want to look further into the Black Bart Brigade. He says that there is a kind of professionalizing of a social movement - that people develop a career in a social movement such as the Jehovah witnesses. There is another type, he adds, who are the people who turn from some other career to organizing this new movement. "The new movement is never the first occupation for anybody; they switch to it, as

economists, and lawyers, and philosophers switched to sociology in the early days."[178] Further he says

> In all of them (the social movements) if they are taken at all seriously, the person interrupts his regular course of work or study. He turns aside to something more important. It can be considered either an interruption of his career or turning to a new career, if by career one means the progress through life in a certain system of things with a certain economy of time and effort.

As a somewhat unorthodox response to career frustration the Black Bart Brigade's way of intervening seems to fit into Hughe's description of pioneers of a social movement. They, too, may have been a part of that process that leads people into becoming deviant career changers that Becker saw as the three steps of frustration, access and supports which have been discussed in the major part of this paper.

As we review this entire paper with its examples of the more traditional forms of career changing and this final example of a more unique way of changing careers, we find certain policy implications which might be considered.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

From such more or less informal social indicators as we have described in this paper one could suggest the following considerations regarding policy implications for career change.

First, we must ask if this surveillance of career changing which has been presented is of any interest. If so, to whom? And even if it is of interest to someone, should something be done about it?

Also, at issue here is the question of whether a private or public policy in a society committed to the work ethic can be encouraged to support alternatives which encourage the talented to drop out of the labor force prematurely?

It does seem that there might be three groups who would have some self-interest in the career changing phenomenon: the employer, the frustrated employee, and the government. Although distinctions need to be made among these three in terms of their policy, the saliency of the career changing issue appears to have a focus peculiar to each. A brief look at these possible policy approaches might bring into focus the particular interests of each.

From the employer's point of view, it may be important to capitalize on a means to identify those employees whose interest in changing their careers can be neatly utilized as a means to get rid of excess middle-aged employees. Conversely, if loss of these employees is a threat to the organization, means to keep the employees will have to be developed if the organization recognizes a burgeoning of career changing in their ranks. These mechanisms could take the form of periodic career satisfaction assessment of their employees. Employers could use placement services for those who should make changes in their careers (according to the employer's needs). For the employee whose services are still desired by the employer, his organization could seek means of alleviating the frustrations which have stimulated the employee to want to leave.

On the other hand, if the employee's interests are of concern, then perhaps such policies as the following should be considered:

1. That the private sector take action to facilitate career change for those who are displaced from employment, for those who desire a change for personal or family reasons, and for those whose renewal by a career change would contribute more to a society.

2. That the private sector institute programs enabling employees to change careers within their organizations or without their organizations.

If there is government interest in a successfully functioning society which takes into account both employer and employee satisfaction, then the following policy focus seems imperative:

> That further research be funded both privately and publicly to determine what the process is that pushes or pulls people into career change in order to more effectively deal with it - for the good of those who change as well as the institutions affected by that change.

Not enough is known about the scope of career change among the white collar and professional employees. Therefore, one cannot even label it a societal "problem" for which there should be formulation of specific policy proposals until much more research is developed to gain needed information about the scope, causes and programmatic responses to career change.

Summary

Throughout this entire presentation an attempt has been made to pull together the points of view of various disciplines regarding career change. Implicit in the paucity of verified data and the plethera of conjectural assessments (with a heavy psycho-social emphasis) is the implication that much research is needed to determine the significance of career change at middle age for the operation of our society. Beginning with the obvious push and pull aspects of career change and delving into the more subtle nuances of system changes, we would no doubt profit by more learned research. The smokes of a growing phenomenon seem to be appearing. Can we determine if there is a fire behind that smoke and can we deal with it effectively if it bursts into flame?

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